

**Cabinet for Health Services  
STATEWIDE NEWS RELEASE**

**Health Services Food Safety Tips For A Safe Memorial Day**

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (May 20, 2002)** -- The Kentucky Cabinet for Health Services wants this Memorial Day weekend and the rest of the cookout season to be safe and healthy for Kentucky families.

Kentuckians can make it safe by taking the appropriate precautions with the food they prepare.

"During the summer months and especially during the Memorial Day weekend, a great number of families and gatherings will be cooking out and preparing foods for meals," said Guy F. Delius, manager of the Cabinet's Food Safety Branch. "Our food processors do a wonderful job packaging and protecting the foods we buy, and we don't want a little mistake during the preparation or cooking process in our homes to cause any illness or something worse."

The Food Safety Branch wants to remind Kentucky cooks of some general food safety tips in hopes of ensuring safe, healthy meals. Make sure all ground beef or hamburgers are thoroughly cooked with no pink inside, and heated to an internal temperature of the meat to at least 155-160 degrees F.

**DO NOT SERVE OR EAT UNDERCOOKED HAMBURGERS.** Remember not to put the cooked burgers back on the same plate the raw burgers were on, without washing the plate properly. Be sure to keep your hands clean, don't cross contaminate hands or surfaces, COOK foods thoroughly, keep food contact surfaces clean, wash raw fruits and vegetables, don't let foods stay at room temperature and refrigerate foods promptly after the meal.

Delius says during potluck gatherings, we should be especially conscious of these food safety tips. A potluck is where different individuals make foods for a common event and share each other's meals. As these events sometimes feed multiple persons or families, one mistake can cause problems for many.

Each cook should follow these keys to food safety and you will help provide safe meals at your gatherings.

**\*WASH HANDS-** Before eating, before preparing food, after using the bathroom, handling raw meat or poultry, changing diapers, and after handling pets. Use soap, warm clean water to wash and a paper towel to dry hands.

**\*CLEAN AND SANITIZE FOOD CONTACT SURFACES OFTEN-** Sanitizing may be accomplished by using a solution of regular household bleach and clean, warm water (1 tablespoon per 2 gallons of water) as a final immersion sanitizing rinse or by spraying or swabbing washed and rinsed surfaces.

**\*SEPARATE: DON'T CROSS CONTAMINATE**

Separate raw from ready to eat foods; use a different utensils and cutting boards or plates between raw and cooked foods or, wash, rinse and sanitize the utensils/plates after contact with raw meat, poultry and seafood.

**\*COOK: HEAT AT LEAST TO THESE PROPER TEMPERATURES**

Fish and Meat (hot dogs)	145 degrees F.	HOT DOGS
Ground meat, fish,	155-160 degrees F.	BURGERS (NO PINK INSIDE)
Poultry	165 degrees F.	CHICKEN
Pork	150 degrees F.	PORK
Eggs-yolk and white firm	155 degrees F.	
Left-overs (reheating)	165 degrees F.	

TO ENSURE PROPER INTERNAL PRODUCT TEMPERATURE OF FOOD, A METAL STEMMED, DIAL-TYPE THERMOMETER SHOULD BE OBTAINED AND USED.

**\*CHILL: REFRIGERATE PROMPTLY**

Don't leave potentially hazardous foods out of temperature before or after cooking:

Refrigerate within 2 hours (Left-overs) to 41 degrees F. or below.

Freeze 0 degrees F. or below.

**\*WASH Fruits and Vegetables:**

Remember to wash raw fruits and vegetables prior to consuming.

"If folks will follow this advice they can avoid the always uncomfortable and sometimes fatal infections that accompany undercooked poultry and beef products. Well done is safe -- anything else is risky," said Dr. Rice Leach, commissioner of the Department for Public Health.

If you have any questions regarding food safety, you may contact your local county health department food safety office, or the State Food Safety Branch at (502) 564-7181.